

ABSTRACT

Communications methods for allowing groups of individuals, such as family members, to contact one another when no one is available to answer calls to a primary, e.g., family, telephone number are described. Calls which go unanswered are connected to a telephony device capable of storing messages and initiating conference calls. If the calling party is determined to be a family member the telephony device accesses a table of contact information corresponding to the unanswered telephone number and offers the caller the opportunity to hear messages from other family members and/or initiate a conference call to one or more family members who have supplied a contact telephone number. Family members can access and update the table of messages and contact number information by telephone or the Internet. Table information can be accessed and updated remotely thereby providing a method of communicating with family members even when no one is at home.